

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 DHA-02 H-01
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8660

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 8455

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PGOV, CASC, UR, US

SUBJ: TEXT OF EMBASSY PROTEST ON TOTH JUNE 14 DETENTION

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EMBASSY PROTEST OF SOVIET
DETENTION OF LA TIMES CORRESPONDENT ROBERT TOTH JUNE
11. PROTEST WAS DELIVERED TO MFA DEPUTY CHIEF USA
DIVISION V.V. MIKHAILOV JUNE 14 AT SAME TIME MIKHAILOV
DELIVERED SOVIET PROTEST (SEPTTEL). TEXT WAS LEFT BEHIND
AS NON-PAPER.

BEGIN TEXT: THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PROTESTS THE DETENTION OF ROBERT TOTH, CORRESPONDENT
FOR THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES ON
JUNE 11.

THIS ACT INTRODUCES A NEW ANDEVEN MORE DISTURBING
ELEMENT INTO WHAT SEEMS TO BE A PERSISTENT EFFORT BY
SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO HARRASS AND INTIMIDATE AMERICAN
CORRESPONDENTS IN THE EXERCISE OF THEIR PROFESSION.
SUCH ACTIONS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED IN THE BEST
INTERESTS OF NORMAL US-USSR RELATIONS. THEIR
IMPACT ON PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES
WILL CLEARLY NOT BE FAVORABLE TO THE SOVIET
UNION.

FURTHER, THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS THIS ACTION AGAINST
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MR. TOTH TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH COMMITMENTS UNDER-
TAKEN BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THROUGH ITS SIGNATURE
TO THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE WHICH CALLS FOR THE PARTICIPATING
STATES TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOURNALISTS TO
COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THEIR SOURCES, AND REAFFIRMS
THAT THE LEGITIMATE PURSUIT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL

ACTIVITY WILL NOT PENALIZE JOURNALISTS.

THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT MR. TOTH WAS APPROACHED THE MORNING OF JUNE 11 BY SEVERAL PERSONS WHO, ALTHOUGH REFUSING TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES, FORCIBLY APPREHENDED HIM WITHOUT PROVIDING ANY GROUNDS FOR THEIR ACTION. AFTER ARRIVING AT MILITIA STATION NO. 17, MR. TOTH'S REQUEST TO SPEAK IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY WITH THE US EMBASSY WAS DENIED, AND THE EMBASSY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED OF HIS DETENTION ONLY THROUGH AN OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WHEN A STATEMENT WAS READ ALLEGING THAT A DOCUMENT WHICH MR. TOTH HAD RECEIVED FROM SOVIET CITIZEN VALERY PETUKOV CONTAINED "SECRETS", MR. TOTH WAS NOT ALLOWED TO EXAMINE EITHER THE DOCUMENT, WHICH HE HAD NOT READ, OR THE ACCUSATORY STATEMENT.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE INCIDENT--WITH MR. TOTH BEING APPREHENDED BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS WHILE MEETING A SOVIET ACQUAINTANCE IN A PUBLIC LOCATION, THE MEETING HAVING BEEN ARRANGED BY TELEPHONE LESS THAN THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE THE APPREHENSION; THE APPREHENSION OCCURRING BEFORE MR. TOTH HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EVEN LOOK AT THE DOCUMENTS HE HAD RECEIVED FROM MR. PETUKOV, AND WHICH MR. TOTH BELIEVED WOULD CONTAIN SCHOLARLY INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY; THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KGB, MFA/PRESS SECTION AND THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT THE

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MILITIA STATION BEFORE AN EMBASSY OFFICIAL WAS NOTIFIED-- AROUSE CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION OVER THE MOTIVATIONS OF THIS ACTION, AND SUGGEST THAT THIS IS BUT THE LATEST AND TO THE PRESENT MOST SERIOUS STEP BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO HARRASS AND INTIMIDATE US CORRESPONDENTS DURING THE EXERCISE OF THEIR PROFESSION. END TEXT.

TOON

NOTE: CLASSIFICATION UPGRADED TO CONFIDENTIAL PER STATE 165289

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: PGOV, CASC, UR, US, (TOTH, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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Declassified/Released
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